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Agenda item 21 (m)
Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum

Letter dated 14 September 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Nauru to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit to you a letter from Rene R. Harris, M.P, President of the Republic of Nauru and Chairman of the Pacific Islands Forum, which is self-explanatory (see annex).

It is requested that the letter and the communiqué attached be issued as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 21 (m), "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum".

(*Signed*) Vinci N. **Clodumar**
Permanent Representative

01-54565 (E) 021001

Annex to the letter dated 14 September 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Nauru to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am honoured, in my capacity as Chairman of the Pacific Islands Forum, to forward the communiqué adopted by leaders* at the thirty-second Pacific Islands Forum, held in Nauru from 16 to 18 August 2001 (see enclosure).**

I kindly request that the communiqué be issued as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Rene **Harris**
President of the Republic of Nauru and
Chairman, Pacific Islands Forum

* Heads of Governments of: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

** The enclosure is being circulated in the language of submission only.

Enclosure

Thirty-second Pacific Islands Forum

Republic of Nauru
16-18 August 2001

Forum communiqué

The Thirtieth Anniversary and Thirty-Second Meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum was held in the Republic of Nauru from 16-18 August 2001 and was attended by Heads of State and Government of the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu and representatives from Australia, the Fiji Islands, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. New Caledonia participated as an observer. The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Rt Hon Don McKinnon was present at the Forum for the first time. A representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations was also present.

2. Leaders thanked the Rt Hon Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, the remaining founding father of the Forum for his keynote address presented to the 30th Anniversary of the Forum reflecting on the growth in strength of the Forum over the years.

3. The Forum observed a moment of silence in remembrance of the former Prime Minister of Tuvalu, the late Hon. Ionatana Ionatana, who passed away since its last meeting and acknowledged his substantial contribution to Tuvalu and the region.

4. Leaders thanked Nauru for hosting the Forum's 30th Anniversary and the Thirty-Second Pacific Islands Forum meeting and acknowledged with appreciation the warm welcome and generous hospitality provided to all delegations to the Forum and for the arrangements made for its meeting.

5. The Forum considered a range of key issues of concern to the region presented through reports of Ministerial Meetings, and the report of the Chairman of the Forum Officials Committee, which met immediately prior to the Forum. Ministerial Meetings held in the course of the year included the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting, the Forum Education Ministers Meeting, the Forum Trade Ministers Meeting and the Pacific ACP Trade Ministers Meeting. The report of the Chairman of the Forum Officials Committee covered several important associated political, international, economic and trade issues.

Forum Trade Ministers Meeting

6. The Forum recalled its decision in 1999 to endorse, in principle, a free trade area among Forum members, and its direction to officials to negotiate the details of the draft Agreement, including negative lists and measures to include Australia and New Zealand. Leaders also noted that a free trade area had been an objective since the very first meeting of the Forum thirty years ago and commended the forward vision of the Forum's forefathers in this matter.

7. Leaders, at this historical 30th Anniversary meeting of the Forum, endorsed the outcomes of the Forum Trade Ministers Meeting held in Apia, Samoa, from 27-28 June 2001, in particular the recommended texts of the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) and the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA) which were opened for signature at Nauru on 18 August 2001. The Forum hailed these agreements as providing a basis for increasing regional integration and as a means to effectively prepare members' economies to respond to globalisation. It looked forward to ratification of the Agreements as soon as possible by sufficient states to enable them to come into force by the next Forum.

8. Leaders also acknowledged the crucial role of Forum Trade Ministers and their Officials as well as the expert guidance of the Forum Secretariat in achieving this longstanding goal.

9. Leaders supported in principle the launching of a new round of negotiations at the 4th WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar and endorsed the focus and strategy for the region at this meeting.

Forum Education Ministers Meeting (FEdMM)

10. The Forum recognised that basic education is the fundamental building block for all societies. When combined with greater employment opportunities, basic education leads to enhanced personal and societal security.

11. Leaders therefore endorsed the outcomes of the Forum Education Ministers Meeting held in Auckland, New Zealand, from 14-15 May 2001, and strongly supported the Forum Basic Education Action Plan 2001. In particular, the Forum welcomed the Pacific Vision for Education which outlines measures for translating the region's priority on basic education into effective action through a set of regional initiatives. In addition they agreed for further work on the provision of necessary resources for basic education, the development of partnerships with non-governmental providers, as well as the incorporation of gender and governance issues in basic education.

12. Leaders also recognised the important role of information technology in the delivery of education and further called on members to urgently implement measures to address the high cost of accessing information technology infrastructure.

Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM)

13. Leaders endorsed the outcomes of the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM) held in Rarotonga, Cook Islands, from 19-20 July 2001. The Forum noted in particular the new challenges and opportunities confronting the region arising from globalisation, and the role Leaders and policymakers have in building on those opportunities, while managing and minimising the risks. Leaders welcomed the focus by FEMM on land and intellectual property rights issues and the stock-take on progress on the implementation of the Forum's Accountability Principles and FEMM Action Plan. In particular Leaders noted the importance of addressing land use issues including its use for commercial purposes.

14. Leaders also endorsed the priority placed on improvements in regional statistics and further development of a regional capacity to coordinate and enhance technical assistance in this area.

Pacific ACP Trade Ministers Meeting

15. Leaders recalled their decision at their 2000 Forum to welcome the signing of the Cotonou Agreement in July 2000, which marked the start of a new economic and political relationship between the ACP states and the European Union and encouraged early ratification of the Cotonou Agreement by all members. The Forum stressed the importance of regional preparations and capacity building in order for members to participate effectively in trade negotiations with the European Union under the Cotonou Agreement, expected to commence in September 2002.

16. The Forum noted the progress made in the preparations for these negotiations and the importance of reflecting the different needs of members in the development of options for the new trade arrangements.

Regional Security

17. The Forum welcomed the progress on reaching an agreed basis for a comprehensive political settlement in Bougainville.

18. The Forum welcomed the holding of elections in Fiji commencing on 25 August 2001.

19. The Forum expressed its support for the efforts of the Solomon Islands' Government and people, and the work of the International Peace Monitoring Team in the Solomon Islands and welcomed the decision to hold elections later this year.

20. Forum Leaders expressed continuing concern about violence and loss of life in the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya (West Papua). They encouraged the Indonesian Government, the sovereign authority, to ensure that the voices of all parties in the province are heard in order to achieve a peaceful resolution of their differences. Forum Leaders welcomed the recent presentation of special autonomy proposals to Indonesia's Parliament. They also urged all parties to protect and uphold the human rights of all residents in Irian Jaya (West Papua). Forum Leaders agreed to follow closely developments in the province.

Western and Central Pacific Tuna Convention (WCPTC)

21. Leaders noted the satisfactory outcomes of the first Preparatory Conference for the implementation of the Western and Central Pacific Tuna Convention and urged those states who have not signed to do so by 5 September 2001, the end of the signature period. The Forum also thanked New Zealand for its substantial efforts in organising the first Preparatory Conference and for initiating and contributing to a Trust Fund to assist developing states to hold future Preparatory Conferences and Small Island Developing States' participation in the Conferences. Leaders also thanked Australia for its recently announced contribution to the Trust Fund.

Shipment of Radioactive Materials

22. The Forum reiterated its continuing concerns over the shipment of radioactive materials through the region. It acknowledged the continued constructive and useful discussions taking place between Forum members and government officials and nuclear industry representatives from France, Japan and the United Kingdom on innovative arrangements and assurances to meet Forum members' continuing concerns.

23. The Forum noted the assurances made by the shipping states and shippers relating to the safety of the shipments and their response in the event of an incident. The Leaders called for the shipping states also to provide assurances on providing compensation in the event of an incident where there was no release of radioactivity. The Forum agreed that its concerns should be constructively and vigorously pursued at the appropriate political level.

South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty

24. Leaders congratulated Tonga for ratifying the Treaty on 18 December 2000 and reiterated their call on the United States to ratify the Protocols to the Treaty.

Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament

25. The Forum, recalling its 1999 decision to pursue genuine and universal disarmament, further urged all its members, its development partners and all those countries which had not done so, in particular the outstanding Annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

26. Leaders encouraged all Forum members to attend the Second Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT to be held in New York from 25-27 September 2001 in order to take all possible steps to ensure early entry into force of the Treaty. Leaders also encouraged those of its members who have been chosen to host monitoring stations under the International Monitoring System of the global verification regime provided for under the CTBT, to complete the arrangements for the setting up of those stations as soon as practicable.

27. The Forum also encouraged early ratification of and accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Ottawa Convention, and conclusion with the International Atomic Energy Agency of NPT Safeguards Agreements and the Additional Protocol.

Population Issues

28. Leaders expressed concerns over increasing problems for countries in the region arising from rapid population increases. Current trends indicate that most members can expect continuing population growth for at least the next three decades. This, in association with the spread of modernisation, will generate a greater demand on limited resources which could further erode the living standards of its people. The Forum called for further work in this area as a matter of priority.

World Summit on Sustainable Development

29. Leaders noted that the UN Summit on Sustainable Development is to be convened in South Africa in September 2002 and recognised that it will provide an opportunity for the region's aspirations and concerns for sustainable development to be heard in the international community. They endorsed the work commenced by CROP organisations in preparing the region for this Summit.

Climate Change and Sea Level Rise

30. Leaders recognised and endorsed the deep concern in the region about climate change and the need to seek international understanding of the unique circumstances of Pacific Island Countries, especially low lying islands.

31. Leaders noted the outcomes of the Resumed Sixth Conference of the Parties (COP6) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Bonn, Germany in July 2001 and reiterated that the Kyoto Protocol remains a significant first step forward on the path to ensuring effective global action to combat climate change.

32. Leaders reaffirmed the importance of the early entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, preferably by 2002, noting that its implementation will result in real and measurable reductions in greenhouse gases.

33. The Forum encouraged all parties to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, observing that some Forum members have already ratified it. Leaders noted the concerns expressed by most members over the United States' intention not to ratify the Kyoto Protocol and agreed that the Forum urge the United States to reconsider its position and ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

34. Leaders encouraged the United States and all other major emitters to contribute towards global efforts to address climate change.

35. Leaders stressed the desirability of all countries making every effort to work towards the resolution of all outstanding negotiating issues at the next Conference of the Parties (COP7).

36. Leaders also called for further commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the future and highlighted the importance that Forum members place on domestic action to reduce emissions.

37. Leaders further recognised the benefits of encouraging renewable energy and energy efficiency to advance the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and directed that regional initiatives in this, and other climate change-related areas, be coordinated using the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific.

Implementation of the Honiara Declaration

38. Leaders expressed their serious concerns that, despite the provision of legal drafting assistance, progress in implementing the legislative priorities of the Honiara Declaration had been disappointingly slow. The need, however, to enact the legislative

priorities identified under the Declaration and for law enforcement cooperation has become more acute since the adoption of the Honiara Declaration almost ten years ago. There is clear evidence of serious transnational crime moving into the region and posing serious threats to the sovereignty, security and economic integrity of Forum members. Leaders therefore directed the Secretariat to carry out a stock-take of members' actions and to report to the 2002 Forum.

Financial Intelligence Units

39. Leaders at their 2000 meeting in Kiribati, recognised the importance of financial information and intelligence sharing among its members and endorsed the establishment of domestic Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) and the scoping of a regional FIU.

40. The Forum welcomed the assistance from the International Monetary Fund in the provision of technical assistance to the region in this area and welcomed the cooperation between its Secretariat and the Asia Pacific Secretariat on Money Laundering through the Coordinating Office for the Participating Countries Anti-Money Laundering Initiative (COAMLI).

Weapons Control

41. Leaders noted the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons and All of its Aspects, held in New York in July 2001 and in particular, the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. The Forum urged all members to support the implementation of the Programme of Action.

42. Leaders also noted the progress made in developing draft weapons control model legislation for the region.

OECD Initiative on Harmful Tax Competition

43. Leaders reaffirmed the sovereign right of nations to establish domestic tax regimes of their own design and choosing. In this regard, they encouraged the development of a cooperative framework within which countries can work together to address transparency, capacity building and appropriate information exchange in relation to tax matters.

44. Leaders endorsed ongoing efforts to reach a negotiated agreement with the OECD on a tax initiative which recognises the needs of both developing and developed countries. They also strongly objected to the creation of any "black list" by the OECD prior to reaching a negotiated agreement.

45. Leaders welcomed the efforts of Australia and New Zealand to encourage fuller consideration by the OECD of Forum members' concerns at the proposed OECD tax initiative and the willingness of OECD to give fuller consideration to those concerns.

Drug Issues

46. The Forum reiterated its concerns over the increase in drug trafficking and in local production of illicit drugs in the region and renewed its call to the international community to cooperate with the region, in particular with regional law enforcement.

47. Leaders welcomed work being undertaken in developing a draft model bill on the control of illicit drugs and reiterated the call in the Honiara Declaration for all members to sign and ratify relevant international treaties and conventions on drug control.

South Pacific Whale Sanctuary

48. Leaders recalled their decision at their 2000 meeting calling for the progressing of a proposal on a South Pacific Whale Sanctuary. Leaders also noted the outcome of the Apia meeting convened to advance the proposal.

49. Leaders, in noting the decision of the International Whaling Commission and the outcomes of the Apia meeting, endorsed the Apia Statement and agreed to pursue the objectives of the proposed South Pacific Whale Sanctuary through national, regional and international actions.

50. Leaders also noted that some Forum members have taken steps to effect protection of whales within their national Exclusive Economic Zones and that other member countries might wish to consider similar action, in which case appropriate technical support could be made available.

Pacific Islands Speakers Forum

51. Leaders welcomed the outcomes of the inaugural Pacific Islands Speakers Forum, in particular the Regional Action Plan for Forum Island Country Legislatures, which contains key principles of best practices to guide legislative development in all Forum Island Countries. The Leaders noted the offer by the Marshall Islands to host the next Speakers Forum in 2002.

52. The Forum recognised the central role of Forum Island Countries' legislatures in promoting good governance. Leaders agreed to provide support, in principle, to the Speakers Forum through the Secretariat subject to availability of funding. They directed the officials to further consider this matter including the issue of long term sustainability.

External Relations

53. The Forum recalled its decision in 2000 to invite the Commonwealth and United Nations Secretaries General and warmly welcomed the participation of the Commonwealth Secretary General, at this 30th Anniversary meeting. Leaders were also pleased that the UN Secretary-General sent a representative to its meeting. A statement on the Commonwealth is at Attachment 1.

54. Leaders, in pursuit of a closer and cooperative relationship with the United Nations, also welcomed the inclusion of an item "*Cooperation between the United Nations*

and the Pacific Islands Forum" on the provisional agenda of the 56th United Nations General Assembly, and commended the outgoing Forum Chairman for the initiative.

55. The Forum called on its members and Dialogue Partners to the Forum to support individually and collectively this initiative at the upcoming United Nations General Assembly.

Republic of Marshall Islands Radioactive Contamination

56. The Forum recognised the special circumstances pertaining to the continued presence of radioactive contaminants in the Republic of Marshall Islands, and reaffirmed the existence of a special responsibility by the United States towards the people of the Marshall Islands, who had been, and are continuing to be, adversely affected as a direct result of nuclear weapons tests conducted by the United States of America during its administration of the islands under the UN Trusteeship mandate.

57. The Forum again reiterated its call on the United States to live up to its full obligations on the provision of adequate and fair compensation and the commitment to its responsibility for the safe resettlement of displaced populations, including the full and final restoration to economic productivity of all affected areas.

Smaller Island States

58. The Leaders noted the decisions of the Smaller Island States Meeting as summarised in its report at Attachment 2.

Sports in the Pacific

59. The Leaders agreed that sports provide a viable and significant opportunity for the Pacific Island Nations to improve the quality of life for its people through better health, education and particular in stimulating the local economy to create new and varied job opportunities. In addition, sports create pathways for young people of the region to achieve better standards of education and job opportunities abroad, a trend, which will be essential to the future survival of our Island Nations. Sports must therefore continue to retain a significant place in the overall development strategies adopted by the Governments of the Pacific Region.

PALM

60. The Leaders reiterated their appreciation of Japan's efforts to enhance relations with the Forum members, particularly through the Pacific Islands Forum/Japan Summit (PALM), noting that the next summit will be in 2003.

Tourism

61. Leaders discussed the desirability of closer collaboration between the Forum and the South Pacific Tourism Organisation and agreed that the Forum Secretariat and SPTO should consult further on how this might be achieved.

Announcements

62. The Leaders welcomed Australia's announcement of the following initiatives:

- Three day seminar on peacekeeping;
- Project to help Pacific island states to secure their armouries;
- Commitment of AUD9.5 million to a new third phase of the AUD24 million South Pacific Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project;
- Technical assistance to affected island states to build capacity in meeting the aims of improved transparency and information sharing in relation to tax matters;
- AUD675,000 to be provided this year for regional sports development under the Australia-South Pacific 2006 programme.

Melanesian Spearhead Group

63. Leaders welcomed a presentation by the Chairman of the Melanesian Spearhead Group Summit in relation to the MSG Leaders' Summit held in Noumea, New Caledonia, on 16-20 July 2001, and noted the MSG's Leaders Joint Statement on the Kyoto Protocol. The Statement is at Attachment 3.

Appreciation

64. The Forum commended the outgoing Chairman, HE Mr Teburoro Tito, President of the Republic of Kiribati, and his Government for his leadership of the Forum over the past year.

Attachment 1

Commonwealth

The Forum welcomed the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Rt Hon Don McKinnon who attended their meeting for the first time in Nauru. The Forum also welcomed the information provided by the Commonwealth Secretary-General on arrangements being made for the Brisbane Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in October 2001. They expressed the region's appreciation for the efforts of the Commonwealth Secretariat in support of the Region's response to the OECD Harmful Tax Competition Initiative.

Leaders also welcomed the proposal for the convening in London in July 2002, of a Commonwealth Summit on Small States. They noted that, since the Commonwealth/World Bank Study on Small States was released in early 2000, significant progress had been made in persuading International Institutions to recognise the special and differential status of small states. They welcomed in particular, the inclusion of a Small States Forum on the agenda of the Annual World Bank meetings and saw this as a positive response to the concerns of small states.

The Forum however recognised that much work remained to be done in their efforts to sensitise the world community to the issues affecting small states and recommitted themselves to this task. In this regard, they noted that the proposed Summit would provide the opportunity for all Member States of the Commonwealth to focus on the priority needs and concerns of small states and the measures required to address those needs.

Attachment 2

Tenth Smaller Island States Summit

Republic of Nauru
17 August 2001

Summary of decisions

Leaders of the Forum's six Smaller Islands States (SIS), comprising Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Republic of Marshall Islands and Tuvalu, met on 17 August 2001 in Nauru. The meeting was chaired by the President of Nauru. Leaders welcomed, particularly, the new Director, Mr Feleti Teo, of the Forum Fisheries Agency and the presence of the Heads of other CROP organisations.

Airline Services

2. The SIS Summit noted the lack of progress on resolving aviation policy issues in the region, which has an impact on SIS members who lacked adequate air services. There was also concern at the slowness in resolving issues concerning the management of Pacific upper airspace. The Leaders noted that Forum Aviation Ministers were scheduled to meet on 19 September 2001, in Samoa, and agreed that their respective delegations will make an effort to effectively represent their common concerns at this meeting.

3. Leaders agreed that the Association of South Pacific Airlines and the Pacific Forum Line be invited to future SIS summits for agenda items concerning aviation and shipping issues, respectively.

Small Grant Funds

4. The Summit thanked donors for their support of assistance programmes aimed at addressing the special concerns of SIS members, and requested that greater efforts be made to ensure that the SIS had improved access, commensurate with their needs, to region-wide schemes such as the Taiwan/ROC-PIFS Scholarship Scheme. Leaders also requested that SPTO be included in the Management Committee for this scheme.

Shipping

5 SIS Leaders welcomed the work being undertaken on reviewing and analysing shipping regulation in the Forum island countries, recognising that this should lead the way to improved shipping links, which in turn provides an important mechanism for enhancing the impact of the prospective Pacific Island Country Trade Agreement.

Issues for Forum

6. The Summit considered the issues that were being brought to the attention of Forum through the letter from the FOC Chair. The Summit agreed that it supported all the

recommendations being made in the letter, but wished to focus on three issues that had a particular impact on their interests, as set out below.

Education

7. SIS Leaders welcomed the *Forum Education Action Plan*, which recognises that basic education is a fundamental building block for society. The Leaders emphasised the urgent need to implement measures to address the high cost of accessing information technology as an important education and information tool for their respective communities.

Climate Change and Sea Level Rise

8. On climate change, the SIS Summit were deeply concerned over the United States' intention not to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, and encouraged the United States to contribute towards global efforts to address climate change. The SIS emphasised that the Kyoto Protocol remains a significant first step towards ensuring effective global action to address climate change and sea level rise, and called on all major emitters of greenhouse gases to support these actions.

United Nations Cooperation

9. The SIS Leaders welcomed the inclusion of an item in the provisional agenda of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "*Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific islands Forum*", and expressed their determination to attend the forthcoming General Assembly. They noted that this also provided an opportunity to directly express their concerns on the issue of climate change and sea level rise, both in the United Nations and direct with the United States.

OECD Harmful Tax Competition Initiative

10. On the OECD's Harmful Tax Initiative, the meeting reaffirmed the sovereign right of nations to establish domestic tax regimes of their own choosing. SIS Leaders encouraged the development of a cooperative framework to address transparency, capacity building and appropriate information exchange in relation to tax matters. The Leaders strongly objected to the creation of any black list by the OECD prior to reaching a negotiated agreement, and welcomed the efforts of Australia and New Zealand to encourage fuller consideration by the OECD of Forum members' concerns over the proposed OECD tax initiative, and the willingness of the OECD to consider those concerns.

Relations with the Commonwealth

11. The Summit welcomed the Secretary General of the Commonwealth, Mr Don McKinnon. He explained plans for a special Commonwealth meeting focussing on small island state issues, scheduled to be held in London on 24 July 2002. Leaders expressed their support for such a meeting. However, they were disappointed that, because the Commonwealth had placed a freeze on new members, not all the SIS would be able to attend.

Attachment 3

Statement by Roch Wamytan, Current Chairman of the Melanesian Spearhead Group at the Thirty-second Pacific Islands Forum

I am indeed most honoured and privileged to be given this special opportunity to address this Forum meeting today. As Leader of the FLNKS, I have an additional role as Chairman of the MSG group since the 14th Summit of Leaders of the Melanesian Spearhead Group was held in Noumea, New Caledonia from 16 to 20 July 2001.

Leaders who attended were the Prime Minister of Vanuatu, the Hon. Edward Nipake Natapei; the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, the Hon. Sir Mekere Morauta; the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Fijian Affairs of the Fiji Islands, Hon. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau; the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Solomon Islands, Hon. David Sitai, and myself as the President of the Front de Liberation Kanak Socialiste (FLNKS) of New-Caledonia.

Leaders in their statements during the opening ceremony highlighted the historical significance of the FLNKS hosting, for the first time, the MSG Summit in New-Caledonia. And the FLNKS confirmed that it will honour the confidence that the MSG has placed on it during the two years of its term as Chairman of the Organization.

At their Retreat, the Leaders discussed and made the following 'Fayava Decisions':

On trade and related matters, the Leaders considered and accepted the recommendations by the MSG Senior officials, in particular the proposed schedule of concessions and Negative Lists of members countries.

Leaders agreed that Vanuatu be the host of the MSG Secretariat. In this regard, the Leaders agreed that MSG Senior officials in consultation with the host, develop an appropriate Headquarters Agreement.

On political and security matters in the Region, the Leaders agreed to maintain regular direct contacts amongst themselves.

The MSG recognised the importance of the Kyoto Protocol and the Leaders agreed to issue a strong statement expressing their view points, and that the matters should be brought to the attention of Leaders at the Pacific Islands Forum, here in Nauru.

In doing so they also urged member countries who are yet to ratify the Protocol to do so.

I am happy to hereby table the MSG statement relating to the Kyoto Protocol for Forum Leaders' consideration as part of this meeting outcome.
Leaders unanimously agreed to support New-Caledonian's application to host the 2007 South Pacific Games.

The MSG also reaffirmed their support of Vanuatu's application for accession to the World Trade Organization.

The issue of the Asian Development Bank Pacific Regional Office was also examined. On the question of it's relocation, the Leaders strongly believe that the office should be moved to a Pacific Island member country.

Leaders were pleased to accept the offer by Solomon Islands to host the next MSG Summit in 2003.

In conclusion, Leaders noted that the government of New-Caledonia's hosting of the 14th MSG Summit was a meaningful demonstration of her goodwill to strengthen relations with MSG Countries. Leaders also noted the facilitative role of the Government of France.

May I now, Mr Chairman, seek your indulgence of allow me to say a few words as the mandated representative of the Government of New-Caledonia.

First of all, I wish to present to the Forum the sincere apologies of the President of the Government of New Caledonia for not being able to attend this 32nd Pacific Islands Forum.

My country recently had the pleasure to welcome the Melanesian Spearhead Group Summit. This Summit was unanimously recognised as an incontestable success. Everyone agreed on its historical character which showed a strong will to integrate and to associate New Caledonia to the activities of the regional organizations, and to develop with them partnership relations, especially with its Melanesian neighbours.

Mr Chairman, I wish to express our deep gratitude to Forum member countries who allowed New Caledonia to attend for the first time, the Forum Officials Committee at their meeting here in Nauru. This is a very encouraging sign for our better involvement in the regional environment.

Mr Chairman, on behalf the Government of New Caledonia, I am pleased today to invite the 'Forum Ministerial Committee on New Caledonia' to visit our country next year. This mission will give the opportunity for the participating states to appreciate the reality of the Caledonian institutions, their workings and particularly the implementation of the Noumea Accord.

I thank you.

Attachment 4

Fourteenth Summit of the Melanesian Spearhead Group
Fayava, Ouvea Island, New Caledonia
19 July 2001

Joint statement on Kyoto Protocol

Leaders of MSG, during the 14th Summit Retreat at Fayava, on Ouvea Island in New Caledonia on 19 July 2001 reaffirmed their commitment to the principles of the Kyoto Protocol, mindful of the deleterious consequences that member countries of the MSG as well as the neighbours in the Pacific region would face if the causes of climate change and sea level rise are not immediately addressed.

Cognizant of this, the MSG Leaders urged other Leaders of countries in similar disadvantaged position to sign and ratify the Kyoto Protocol as soon as possible.

The Leaders noted with extreme disappointment the refusal by the United States to review its position on the targets for reduction of Green House Gas emissions.

The Leaders further noted that the level of Green House Gas emissions by Australian industries is the highest in the Pacific region. They expressed deep concern over their (Australia) continued reluctance to make a positive commitment on this issue of critical importance to the Pacific Island Countries.

The MSG Leaders agreed to further pursue this issue at the forthcoming Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) meeting in Nauru with a view to the PIF taking a more proactive position and action plan on this matter.

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Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 20 (b)
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Assistance for humanitarian relief and the economic and social rehabilitation of Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General*

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* The delay in the submission of the report was due to developments in the situation in Somalia.

01-54595 (E) 101001

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 55/168 of 14 December 2000, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures for the implementation of that resolution and to report thereon to the Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. It is a review of the current situation in Somalia, detailing humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance provided by the United Nations and its partners over the past year, and draws attention to priority areas of assistance according to likely developments.

II. Socio-economic situation

2. In Somalia, long-standing political, economic and social systems that sustain both lives and livelihoods have been disrupted and transformed by more than a decade of conflict and recurrent episodes of drought and flooding. In the early 1990s, at the height of the civil war, these factors combined to create a humanitarian crisis of immense proportions. Famine, epidemic outbreaks and direct violence claimed the lives of an estimated 400,000 persons.

3. While the plight of Somalis has not remained so visible since the departure of the United Nations Operation in Somalia in 1995, the country's long history of civil strife and economic stratification has limited the ability of many Somalis to cope with further stress or even to meet their basic human needs. As a result, Somalia faces some of the world's highest rates of mortality, morbidity and malnutrition.

4. On average, Somalis face 17 per cent global and 4 per cent severe malnutrition. The infant mortality rate is 132 per 1,000 live births, while the mortality rate for children under five years of age is 224 per 1,000. The maternal mortality rate is 1,600 per 100,000 live births. Morbidity rates are impossible to quantify given the lack of health infrastructure, but poor Somalis are severely vulnerable to tuberculosis, malaria, measles, cholera and kala azar. The limited access to safe water (some 28 per cent of the population) and primary school education (enrolment of 13.8 per cent of children) are mere indications of the critically low access to basic social services by the majority of the population.

A. Political and security situation

5. There have been a number of important political developments in Somalia during the reporting period. These include: the establishment of the Transitional National Government (TNG) in Mogadishu in October 2000; the formation of the Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council in March 2001 by faction leaders opposed to TNG; the holding of the referendum on the Constitution of the self-declared "Republic of Somaliland" in May 2001; and the ending of the three-year initial Charter for Puntland in July 2001.

6. However, these developments have not yet resulted in any significant transformation of the daily lives of Somalis. The socio-political map in Somalia remains one divided between the relatively stable environments in north-west and north-east Somalia compared to the relative insecurity in the south.

7. Civilian populations still suffer intermittent violence in the southern regions. In April 2001, in the Gedo region, fighting around the town of Bulla Xawa caused the displacement of some 10,000 persons into northern Kenya and the death of some 30 persons. In addition, the southern ports of Kismayo and Merca remain places of ongoing, sporadic conflict between rival political interests. Competition over resources, particularly land and urban infrastructure, continues to underpin violence, including the burning of villages. As a result, access to vulnerable populations in the Juba and Shabelle River Valleys is often restricted.

8. In Mogadishu, TNG has succeeded in winning over two of the five factions opposed to it. Furthermore, it has continued its policy of regularizing militias and purchasing and controlling armed vehicles known as "technicals". It has also established 14 police posts in the city. However, there remain a number of militarily strong factions opposed to TNG in the city. Outbreaks of fighting include the incident in Mogadishu port in May 2001 between militias belonging to Hussein Aideed and those of a prominent businessman, Abdulle Delaf, resulting in 50 deaths and over 150 casualties. Subsequently, during a six-day period over the weekend of 9 July, fighting in north Mogadishu between Abgaal sub-clans, which was followed by clashes between Ayr militia and those belonging to factional leaders Osman Ato and Hussein Aideed, resulted in over 100 deaths and many casualties.

9. The continuing instability in southern Somalia has restricted aid programming. Large areas, including Mogadishu, Lower and Middle Juba, southern Gedo and Lower Shabelle, remain off-limits to regular monitoring and intervention by international agencies. Over the year a number of agencies have withdrawn, including Doctors Without Borders-Belgium in Kismayo, or had operations severely restricted, including World Vision in Buale and Doctors Without Borders-Spain and Action contra la faim (ACF) in Mogadishu, owing to insecurity. The most persistent problem for all agencies in Somalia — north and south — is the settlement of contractual disputes and the frequent use of violence as a last resort.

10. The most dramatic incident affecting aid programmes was the kidnapping of six international United Nations staff and three Doctors Without Borders-Spain staff in Mogadishu in late March. Although all were ultimately released, the initial attack led to the loss of Somali life and destroyed a non-governmental organization (NGO) compound. This attack followed the previous kidnapping in July 2000 of two expatriate staff working for ACF. As a result, there is no longer a permanent expatriate presence in Mogadishu and any significant aid intervention in the city has been curtailed.

11. Many intergovernmental organizations, including the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations, continually call upon all parties within Somalia to resolve political differences by peaceful means. However, until such time that there is sustained reconciliation in Somalia, factional and criminal violence will continue to play havoc with Somali lives and severely restrict access to and the impact of aid programming.

B. Humanitarian issues

12. Over the past year, emergency conditions across Somalia abated significantly, owing to positive environmental conditions and good harvests. However, gains were insufficient to break the seasonal cycle of boom and bust for poor and middle-income households.

13. Today, this vulnerability is being exacerbated by a number of factors: the partial failure of *gu* rains in key food-producing regions of the south; the economic downturn due to the ban on livestock exports in the north; insecurity and violent conflict; and inflation resulting from injections of new Somali shilling notes. These factors are not expected to produce large-scale, life-threatening conditions over the next six months. However, with persistent mean malnutrition rates of between 15-20 per cent in vulnerable areas and child mortality rates as high as 224 per 1,000, aid agencies will have to continue to provide significant levels of humanitarian aid to prevent the loss of life and the rapid deterioration of livelihood.

14. Following the partial failure of *gu* season rains in southern Somalia, the Bay, Bakol, Gedo and Hiran regions will face severely reduced harvest output for sorghum, the staple crop. The full extent of food insecurity will only become evident during the October-December period. The heaviest burden will be borne by poor agro-pastoralists, who number nearly 400,000 individuals in the above-mentioned regions.

15. Water catchments in these regions are already drying up, although pasture conditions are near the seasonal norm and household food stocks are considered adequate (but decreasing) following last year's good harvests. Lack of water is likely to lead to above-normal stress migration and may increase the prevalence of disease.

16. Food security in southern Somalia may deteriorate rapidly from this initial assessment if any of the following assumptions significantly change: (i) commodity price levels increase; (ii) terms of trade for labour, milk and agricultural produce deteriorate; (iii) transport routes, market access and kinship networks open for trade with surplus-producing areas (e.g. the Juba and Shabelle regions) become restricted.

17. On its own, one season of limited harvest output will not lead to a serious crisis. In this regard, the success of the *deyr* season rains and harvest in late 2001 is the major risk factor to be monitored. In addition to immediate response measures, continued focus on the structural causes of vulnerability is required, including measures to address chronic health factors, ensuring access to basic social services and rebuilding poor household asset bases.

18. In the northern regions, the livestock ban continues to reduce the ability of poor households to procure necessary social services and food commodities. The most vulnerable groups include internally displaced persons and the urban poor (both of which rely on trade-related employment), as well as

poor pastoralist households (which receive fewer remittances and rely on urban employment as a coping mechanism). The effects of the livestock ban have been mitigated by favourable environmental conditions in 2000 and increased remittances from the diaspora.

19. Towards the end of the dry season in April, many pastoralist groups were forced into debt to procure water, while livestock in the coastal areas of Awdal died due to lack of pasture and water. The arrival of the *gu* rainy season alleviated these stresses. However, if the *deyr* season rains are not favourable in the north-east and north-west, domestic production may no longer be an adequate buffer to the shock of economic downturn and widespread food insecurity may emerge. Continuous monitoring is required.

20. Thus far, the annual cholera outbreak has generated fewer than one quarter the number of cases recorded last year. If this trend continues, it will be the mildest outbreak since 1994. Since 1 January, a total of 1,636 cases and 116 deaths have been recorded, leaving an overall case fatality rate of 7.1 per cent. A reported outbreak of new cholera cases in Luuq, in the Gedo region, is currently being investigated. No significant changes in other key diseases, including kala azar, measles and malaria, were reported.

C. Economic issues

21. Vulnerability in Somalia is too commonly attributed to the country's arid natural resource base. While environmental factors are important (in 1997, El Niño rains led to massive flooding, outbreaks of disease and infrastructural damage, while recent poor rains have caused poor harvests), they disguise the key economic factors underpinning the vulnerability of one quarter of the Somali population. These are man-made factors that exist within the natural context of environmental uncertainty.

22. **Asset depletion and destitution.** Political violence has crippled the production capacity of rural households and forced hundreds of thousands of Somalis to flee from their homes. This loss of assets, including land and livestock, has resulted in overwhelming destitution for previously self-sustaining households.

23. **Limited benefits from economic expansion.** Unequal relations of production and high urban unemployment rates have maintained very low returns to labour, even when the demand for that labour has risen substantially. Unequal terms of trade between capital (in limited supply) and labour (in large supply) mean that private-sector employment for the poor has not yielded anything more than subsistence wages. This does not allow for savings or investment substantial enough for the poor to gain access to new means of production.

24. **Lack of infrastructure and social services.** Following the gradual decline in State investment in social services throughout the 1980s, much of the material, equipment and expertise required to provide and sustain public goods was destroyed and displaced during the civil war. Trade and transportation suffer because of the poor road system as well as insecure conditions along many of the major routes. Despite the best efforts of United Nations agencies, NGOs and donors, public access to aid services is limited by the concentration of projects in urban areas, dwindling agency presence in southern regions and a continually dwindling funding base.

25. **Lack of macroeconomic management.** Large sums of newly printed Somali shillings arriving in Mogadishu have generated rampant inflation. Whereas the shilling has generally remained stable for years, exchanging between So.Sh. 8,000-10,000 per United States dollar, the increased money supply has devalued the currency to over So.Sh. 20,000 per dollar in 2001. Poor and middle-income households that predominantly hold shillings are now unable to purchase imported food items, while the value of any existing savings has decreased by half.

26. **Market dependency and volatility.** Very few, if any, Somali households survive on subsistence production alone. Rather, domestic livestock and agricultural produce are traded for imported foodstuffs and other durable items. Owing to the combination of variable supply of local produce, insecure access to urban market areas and volatile demand from some regional markets (as evidenced by the occasional bans on the export of livestock), Somali producers are vulnerable to extreme fluctuations in their ability to utilize markets to their advantage.

27. **Social support and remittances.** Intra-clan, intra-community and intra-family assistance and resource redistribution have been vital in mitigating the worst effects of recurrent stress and crises. In particular, the Somali diaspora has played a key role by

returning a portion of foreign-earned wages to relatives in Somalia. However, the benefits of the remittance economy accrue primarily to urban, middle-class groups which, because of educational and employment opportunities during the pre-war era, are more likely to have kin living abroad.

III. United Nations assistance in Somalia

28. United Nations agencies work in tandem with over 60 international NGOs and the Red Cross movement, which, with donors, comprise the Somalia Aid Coordination Body (SACB). Over the last 12 months more than $100 million has been disbursed in aid (some $50 million through the United Nations system). The United Nations agencies have adopted a four-part humanitarian development strategy to increase access to essential social services and build an enabling environment for peace and reconciliation. The pillars of this strategy are to (i) gain access to vulnerable populations; (ii) secure a safe operating environment; (iii) provide assistance and protection; and (iv) improve coordination, security and support services.

29. However, Somalia remains one of the most difficult operating environments in the world. All United Nations agencies have a permanent presence in Somalia, but since 1995 international aid agencies have been based in Kenya, and as with all cross-border operations, the provision of assistance is extremely expensive and arduous. With such operations there are a number of overarching constraints, including restricted and unpredictable access owing to insecurity; lack of presence of international partners in much of southern and central Somalia; limited or late funding, curtailing prevention and longer-term activities; and community expectations and needs that heavily outweigh the capacity of many agencies.

30. Despite the difficult operating environment of Somalia, United Nations agencies have achieved a number of objectives outlined in the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Somalia for 2001.

A. Food security and rural development

31. With the improvement of the food security situation in most of Somalia during the latter part of 2000, the World Food Programme (WFP) made a shift in strategy away from emergency food distribution towards more food-for-work and social support. Given the low level of needs over the past nine months, the Programme's food pipeline was reasonably healthy in the first part of 2001. However, with the likelihood of increased vulnerability among populations in many parts of the country, WFP foresees a very significant increase in its distribution requirements during the latter half of the year. Pending a more definitive assessment of the *gu* crop harvest by the Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU), WFP now estimates a minimum requirement of 20,000 tons (amounting to $16.4 million) to meet food aid needs to end-June 2002.

32. WFP distributed 15,296 tons of food commodities to an estimated 1.3 million beneficiaries in Somalia from July 2000 to June 2001. Of this, 62 per cent was distributed in the south, 25 per cent in the north-west and 13 per cent in the north-east. Of the total, 12 per cent was utilized for relief activities, 62 per cent for rehabilitation and recovery activities through food-for-work and 26 per cent for support to social institutions like maternal and child health centres, care institutions, tuberculosis treatment centres, pilot school feeding and adult literacy programmes.

33. The combined efforts of the food agencies, including WFP, the Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) and the International Committee of the Red Cross, contributed to reducing malnutrition rates and stabilizing food market prices. By ensuring timely food intervention and profiting from good harvests, acute food shortages and widespread hunger were averted.

34. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) provided 330 tons of seeds and tools to 16,500 vulnerable farmers, 20,000 vegetable kits and 40,000 hoes so as to increase food production in households headed by females and diversify the crops of vulnerable farming households in rain-fed and irrigated areas. Home gardening support, with nutritional education, is provided to increase vegetable production for domestic consumption and local marketing for female-headed households in the riverine areas and FAO assisted in constructing 35 sluice gates for cultivation and flood prevention work. Another eight sluice gates were completed during the first half of 2001.

35. An emergency response by FAO and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to the floods in the Lower Juba valley resulted in the reconstruction of houses in Arare village. The Juba River embankment was also rehabilitated to close breakages on the east bank between Jamame and Jilib. Seventy-five tons of maize seeds and 35 tons of cowpea seeds were distributed to vulnerable farmers in the Jamame district for planting in the *gu* season.

36. FAO and UNDP collaborated on ways in which the United Nations could support efforts to lift the ban on livestock imports imposed by Gulf States on the Horn of Africa. The joint activities aimed at (i) contributing to increased dialogue about livestock trade between importing and exporting countries; (ii) developing well-regulated longer-term export quality assurances as well as removing the current ban; and (iii) developing the appropriate technical and scientific consensus on ways of reducing disease transmission. One importer, the United Arab Emirates, has lifted the key ban and others are engaged in continuing technical, business and political dialogue.

37. The Food Security and Assessment Unit continued to monitor food insecurity and provide early warning of emergencies. In collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other partners, the Unit has carried out nutritional surveillance and provided training and technical support to partners. A FAO special fund provided input to agricultural activities in the Lower Shabelle, Bay and Hiran regions. These activities were carried out by local NGOs.

B. Health and nutrition

38. UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO), in partnership with NGOs, local authorities and communities, vaccinated an estimated 1 million children against polio, while sustaining the provision of essential drugs and basic medical equipment to some 350 health units all over Somalia. Medical supplies, including equipment and drugs, were provided sufficiently by UNICEF to support the work of all actors in the primary health-care sector throughout Somalia. These include malaria and cholera kits and supplies for the expanded programme on immunization to enable the work of mother and child health facilities, health posts, traditional birth attendants and community health workers. More than 15,000 individuals benefited from the Fund's supplementary feeding programmes in central and southern Somalia.

39. A standardized health information system, which had been lacking in Somalia, was finally initiated through the efforts of WHO, UNICEF, FSAU and other SACB partners in all 18 regions of the country. In addition, a rapid outbreak detection network system for cholera, meningitis, measles, bloody diarrhoea and other diseases was established in all regions. The system allows for comparison of data and thus serves as a useful tool for emergency response and monitoring health trends. Outbreak surveillance for epidemic diseases was carried out nationwide, with cholera control activities implemented in Puntland and southern and central Somalia. Furthermore, as part of emergency preparedness, WHO trained 55 technicians in laboratory support and 93 health workers to build local capacities for outbreak crisis-response.

40. Capacity-building in health services management was provided to local authorities and communities through training programmes and workshops across Somalia. Specifically, UNICEF supported five regional health planning workshops and the training of five regional health boards under the decentralization of health management structures in Somaliland. WHO continued to promote increased awareness of mental health issues and provided psychiatric drugs and training to relevant partners.

41. As part of a special global initiative, Somalia has been one of only five countries around the world to be selected for support from the global drug fund in the tuberculosis programme. WHO supported the establishment of an additional five tuberculosis centres in Somalia. New initiatives were aimed at improving the functional integration of existing health sector interventions with other, cross-sectoral initiatives. These included the rehabilitation of and provision of better sanitation facilities to the Bossaso mother and child care centre, which serves as a women's centre providing health education and services.

42. In collaboration with the SACB Nutrition Working Group, FAO and UNESCO developed nutrition education materials for community members and field workers, held pilot nutrition training for teachers and prepared a teachers' guide on nutrition in primary schools.

C. Water and sanitation

43. UNICEF, in partnership with NGOs, local authorities and communities, rehabilitated urban water systems, rural boreholes and hand-dug wells. A total of four urban and semi-urban water systems were rehabilitated or constructed in Somalia. A number of boreholes and mini-water systems were rehabilitated, nine in the north-west, 11 in the north-east and 33 in south and central Somalia. One hundred and twenty-three wells with hand-pumps were dug in south and central Somalia, another 40 were dug in the north and 20 were dug in both Puntland and Somaliland. This improved the accessibility of clean water for about 500,000 people over the course of the year.

44. In south and central Somalia, the priority was to restore and upgrade water facilities in the rural areas. In this respect, cost-sharing for rehabilitation activities was initiated, resulting in the success of the project. In the northern regions of Puntland and Somaliland, the focus was on upgrading and building new water systems for urban and major towns in collaboration with line ministries.

45. UNICEF provided supplies to combat outbreaks of disease and improved the supply of safe water to urban settlements by establishing chlorination systems. Other sanitation activities included construction of latrines and hand-washing facilities for schools. Capacity-building activities have been undertaken, in particular, on the development of strategy and policy framework with local authorities.

46. FAO, in collaboration with UNDP, has established a water information management system to improve data collection and the analysis of water resources, particularly in drought and flood-prone areas.

D. Education

47. UNICEF and UNESCO, in partnership with NGOs, local authorities and communities, increased gross enrolment in primary schools by 34 per cent in the past one and a half years, including an increase in school attendance of 35 per cent for girls. Moreover, 50 new schools were constructed in hard-to-reach areas, community education committees were established in 800 schools and in-service training was provided to new teachers. The establishment of improved sports and recreation activities and facilities was also supported.

48. Thirteen syllabi for skill-grades 2 and 3 were developed in the areas of carpentry, garment-making, masonry, metal fabrication, electrical installation, agriculture and entrepreneurship. Reference materials and textbooks were provided. These services have also been extended to support peace and reconciliation initiatives through the initiation of basic and vocational education for demobilization of youth militia.

E. Human rights and gender

49. Work undertaken by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), UNICEF, UNDP and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), in partnership with local and international partners, included mainstreaming of human rights and gender issues into all United Nations programmes. The results included common guidelines and joint initiatives in advocacy on such issues as female genital mutilation, judicial and police training and legal development. Specifically, UNICEF, with assistance from UNIFEM, continued to work with religious, educational and advocacy leaders in promoting the eradication of female genital mutilation. UNICEF and UNIFEM have also been involved in promoting women's participation in civil governance and self-help groups.

50. In order to strengthen the capacities of women as peace-builders, UNIFEM developed with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) a gender disaggregated database on demobilization and reintegration for former militias and their dependants in north-west Somalia. UNIFEM also undertook a preliminary study on the role of women in demobilization efforts in Mogadishu, providing the basis for a gender mainstreamed demobilization programme. Additionally, United Nations agencies have promoted the role of women in facilitating inter-clan dialogue under the culture of peace programme. UNICEF and UNIFEM advocated for women's rights and the elimination of all forms of discrimination through campaigns during International Women's Day and other activities. Furthermore, UNIFEM has been active in facilitating inter-clan dialogue among women to promote reconciliation, particularly in the Jowhar, Lower Shabelle and Bay regions.

F. Repatriation and reintegration

51. UNHCR continued its support for the voluntary repatriation and initial reintegration of Somali returnees during 2000 and 2001 in line with its policy regarding voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees developed at the end of 1999. A total of 51,481 refugees from Ethiopia (50,340), Djibouti (886) and Yemen (255) benefited from UNHCR assistance to return to their areas of origin during the reporting period. Most of them have settled in north-western and north-eastern regions, with the remainder opting to settle in Mogadishu.

52. One of the main activities undertaken by UNHCR, in collaboration with the authorities, was to monitor the settlement of returnees and to ensure that their rights were not violated. In this context, UNHCR carried out a total of 129 community-based Quick Impact Projects in areas where the returnees were settled, in a number of different sectors, including water and sanitation, health, education and food security. These projects, apart from meeting the basic needs of the communities and increasing the capacity of those areas to receive more returnees, have played a role in fostering reconciliation between the returnees and host communities.

53. A UNHCR and UNDP joint initiative was finalized and implementation of the programme began in July 2001. The programme covers four districts, including Hargeisa, Burao, Garowe and Bossaso. The experience gained from the implementation of this project will guide similar approaches to the implementation of reintegration programmes in other regions in Somalia.

G. Development programmes

54. The Somali Civil Protection Programme (SCPP) continued to expand its activities across Somalia. Two hundred and fifty policemen completed training at the Mandera Police Training Centre. Another 350 policemen are currently participating in the training. The rehabilitation of the Centre commenced in mid-June. Another 3,000 former militiamen are currently being trained at the Lafole Training Centre, the Somali Asphalt Centre and at the ex-police transport compound in Mogadishu.

55. SCPP national experts travelled extensively in all districts of Somalia, meeting with local authorities and communities to raise awareness about the community policing approach. This resulted in the creation of six regional and 15 local centres and in the communities' actively participating in community policing. The rehabilitation of various structures in Somaliland is in progress. These include the three courts in Hargeisa, the courts in Gabiley and Boroma, the Hargeisa, Boroma and Gabiley prisons and a training hall for the judiciary system.

56. Nine workshops have been held in Mogadishu in 2001. The workshop participants included armed militia, intellectuals, religious and traditional leaders and parliamentarians. As a result, a general conference on demobilization was developed, the aim being to obtain policy and strategy recommendations.

57. The Somali Mine Action Center (SMAC) and Information Management System for Mine Action were established through assistance for the SCPP programme. Training in demining supervision, data management, logistics and financial management was provided to 20 staff members of SMAC. In the north-east, the Puntland Mine Action Center was established.

58. Trade is the mainstay for the Somali people. Owing to the lack of funding, the development of seaports and trade was scaled down to a minimum. UNCTAD continued its support to the private sector by expanding training activities and providing assistance for marketing. Critically needed equipment was provided and information technology was upgraded.

59. A pilot radio project was initiated in the beginning of 2001. A series of audio programmes were produced and re-broadcast throughout Somalia. Radio programmes are a means of communicating with the Somali people on the activities and views of various United Nations bodies and the Somali diaspora. In return, the Somali people also get a chance to voice their concerns. Some areas of Somalia have not benefited from this service owing to insecurity.

60. UNDP launched three new projects over the past year to support good governance, economic growth in favour of the poor and the reintegration of refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons. With the funding received thus far, implementation of the programmes across the country is now ready to begin.

H. Coordination and security

61. The United Nations coordination unit maintained the proactive preparation and response mechanisms in the Humanitarian Analysis/Humanitarian Response Group. The unit, in close collaboration with SACB, also provided support to agencies on formulating strategies for working in Somalia. Coordination at the field level has been greatly improved by the placement of dedicated field coordination officers and through the regular holding of inter-agency meetings and strategy sessions. Furthermore, the unit has promoted the wider use of humanitarian principles and operational guidelines in engagement with local authorities in Somalia.

62. The United Nations security establishment has met the minimum operating security standards for Somalia and United Nations staff security has been enhanced to minimum levels through the cost-shared security system and also received much needed equipment from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

IV. Assistance provided by Member States

63. Accomplishing the tasks described above is only possible with adequate financial and material resources. To support their humanitarian, recovery and development activities, United Nations agencies launched the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for 2001.

64. To date, only $20,727,179, or 16 per cent, of the funding requested in the appeal for 2001 has been provided by the States Members of the United Nations. Without further assistance, it will be impossible to extend the United Nations presence in Somalia and provide emergency assistance to populations in need.

V. Observations

65. The combined effects of a decade of continuing conflict at varying levels, climatic change and economic disinvestment have made Somalia one of the poorest places on Earth. On average, Somalis live off less than half a dollar a day and have an average life expectancy of 45 years of age. As environmental conditions deteriorate once again, with the prospects for increasing vulnerability and malnutrition ever likely towards the end of 2001 and the beginning of 2002, increased international support is even more important.

66. However, few vulnerable Somalis are able to rebuild their livelihoods in a sustainable manner. One of the long-term socio-economic effects of the war in Somalia has been to entrench differential access to the country's productive resource base. The expansion of the private sector has benefited from available resources. However, groups that have become dispossessed have not benefited from concomitant returns. Poverty is sustained by Somalia's history of economic stratification, devastated household asset bases, lack of basic social services and the progressive alienation of producers from the country's productive resource base. Until such underlying factors are addressed, longer-term development efforts will be compromised. From this analysis, there are a number of observations which can be made about the current situation in Somalia.

67. Further steps need to be taken to assist in the building of a sustainable peace in Somalia. Such a transition should include a robust framework which addresses many of the issues arising from the Somali conflict. In particular, these issues include the nature of governance and political structures in Somalia, the forced appropriation of land and property and past human rights atrocities.

68. Such efforts by national actors, supported by international actors, must encompass the promotion and protection of human rights, with special attention to restoring social and economic rights through the rehabilitation of basic social services and infrastructure. This should be undertaken with particular attention to marginalized and vulnerable communities which are continually prone to the exigencies of economic and climatic shocks, resulting in a continuing cycle of humanitarian emergency.

69. While social breakdown and upheaval has had a negative impact upon women, particularly with an increase in violence and destitution, it has also transformed gender relations. Women are more and more at the forefront of domestic, economic and political decision-making. Such forces, along with an increase in the role of civil society and the media, must be supported by external actors.

70. Given the political fragility of Somalia, all efforts by the international community will be continued to

ensure a synchronized political and aid approach allowing for humanitarian access and neutrality. Such an incremental approach of increased engagement according to the appropriate conditions, without exacerbating internal conflict, remains the core of the aid programme for Somalia.

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Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie

Report of the Secretary-General*

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/25 of 17 October 1999 in which the Assembly invited the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps, in consultation with the Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF), to continue to promote cooperation between the two organizations and requested him to submit to it at its fifty-sixth session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

2. The present report deals with the main initiatives and activities undertaken over the last two years by the United Nations system and OIF within the context of cooperation on preventive diplomacy, peace-making and peace-building and in the areas of promotion of human rights and economic, social and cultural development.

3. The Hanoi Summit, which was held in 1997, adopted the Charter of OIF, under which the Organization was assigned the objectives of assisting in the establishment and development of democracy, the prevention of conflicts, the strengthening of the rule of law and protection of human rights, the intensification of dialogue between cultures and civilizations, the establishment of closer ties among peoples and the strengthening of solidarity through multilateral cooperation activities with a view to promoting the growth of their economies.

II. Political cooperation between secretariats

4. In the application of the agreement between the United Nations and OIF of 25 June 1997, political issues constitute one of the principal areas of cooperation. In that area, cooperation between the two organizations takes place usually between their respective secretariats. It mostly takes the form of regular contacts with the Office of the Permanent Observer for OIF in New York on issues that are being actively followed by the United Nations and OIF, with exchanges of information and analyses and working sessions both between senior officials of the two organizations and at the expert level.

5. In that spirit and pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/2, OIF participated in the Fourth High-Level United Nations-Regional Organizations Meeting which took place in New York on 6 and 7 February 2001. The subject of the meeting was cooperation for peace-building.

* The footnote requested by General Assembly resolution 54/248 was not included in the submission.

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6. At that meeting OIF expressed its views concerning international cooperation on peace-building. It, inter alia, emphasized the usefulness of increased sharing of information regarding the individual experiences and capacities of each organization as regards peace-building. Concerning cooperation between the United Nations and the regional organizations, it called for strengthening synergies between the programmes of international organizations, bilateral cooperation and the programmes and activities undertaken by non-governmental organizations and using them to build the peace desired by the democratic institutions of the State concerned and non-governmental actors. It also called for exchanges of academic studies on peace-building and appealed to the Bretton Woods institutions to give due consideration to the special needs of countries emerging from conflict.

7. The meeting prepared a framework for cooperation for peace-building to guide the future cooperation between the United Nations and the regional organizations in that area and identified possible cooperation activities and specific follow-up measures.

8. Since the eighth Summit of Heads of State and Government of countries that use French as a common language, which was held at Moncton, Canada, in September 1999, OIF has further expanded and intensified its political and diplomatic interventions. It has continued its actions to promote peace in Burundi, in the Central African Republic, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Togo and has instituted new actions in the Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Haiti, inter alia, by sending facilitation missions or information and contact missions and by having representatives of the Secretary-General of OIF participate in peace talks.

9. Because of the active role it is playing in the efforts of the international community to contribute to a settlement of the conflict in Burundi, the United Nations invited the Special Envoy of OIF to participate in the various meetings of special envoys and special representatives in/to Burundi organized in 1999 and 2000. The first such meeting — which was attended by the special envoys and special representatives of Canada, the European Union, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the United States, the United Nations and OIF — was held on 19 October 1999, at a time when the health of Mwalimu Nyerere, facilitator of the Arusha peace process in Burundi, had suddenly deteriorated. The Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat continued these consultations with the special envoys and special representatives when Nelson Mandela, former president of South Africa, took over from Mwalimu Nyerere. Three such meetings were held in 2000.

10. In the context of the OAU peace process in the Comoros, the United Nations and OIF continue to exchange information on political developments in that country and to consult regularly concerning what should be done to effectively support OAU efforts. On 17 February 2001, the Comorian parties, including the Government and the Anjouans, signed a new framework agreement for reconciliation in the Comoros, under the auspices of OAU and OIF. In his statement of 24 April 2001, the Secretary-General of the United Nations praised OAU, OIF and their partners for their respective efforts which had made it possible to reach a peace and reconciliation agreement in the Comoros.

11. At the meetings of the Security Council on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, held on 24 and 25 January 2001, OIF made a statement in the presence of the heads of State of the signatories to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. In it, OIF stressed the support given to the Lusaka Agreement by the heads of State and Government of OIF at the Moncton Summit, and the commitment of the Organization's Secretary-General to the search for a negotiated solution to the Congolese conflict, inter alia, through the good offices missions which he sent to that country and to the region only a few weeks prior to the start of the crisis.

12. OIF participated in the special meeting on security and development in the Central African Republic which the United Nations organized jointly with the German authorities in New York, on 15 and 16 May 2000 to follow up on Security Council resolution 1271 (1999). Before that, it had been associated with the five preparatory meetings organized by the Department of Political Affairs with the group of friends of the Central African Republic.

13. A delegation from the Central African Republic, led by the Prime Minister, was present at the meeting. There were 66 delegations representing 48 countries — including the members of the Security Council — and representatives of the World Bank, the International

Monetary Fund, the OAU, the European Commission, the African Development Bank, OIF and other regional institutions and the specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system. The purpose of the meeting was to mobilize the support of the international community for programmes for the restructuring of the armed forces and for the demobilization and reintegration of retired military personnel and for the development programme set up by the Central African Government.

14. OIF reiterated its solidarity with the Central African people and Government and announced a series of projects to be implemented in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The projects related to areas (support for democratic institutions, promotion of human rights, rural development and so on) which had been identified by the mission OIF had dispatched to Bangui, from 2 to 5 May 2000, in preparation for the meeting in New York.

15. The involvement of OIF in the process of stabilization and reconstruction in the Central African Republic was drawn to the attention of the Security Council in a further statement by OIF to the Council, on 23 January 2001. At that meeting, OIF pointed out that it had always been interested in that member country and recalled the efforts the French-speaking countries had made to restore peace in the Central African Republic following the mutinies that broke out in that country in 1996 and 1997, inter alia, by facilitating the conclusion of the Bangui Agreements and by contributing actively to the implementation of the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB) and the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA). It reiterated that it was prepared to contribute to the international community's efforts at that phase of the peace-building through a series of economic and social assistance measures. To that end OIF dispatched two missions to Bangui, in order to identify, together with the Central African authorities, the needs and possibilities for assistance.

16. In Guinea Bissau, OIF helped ensure that the elections proceeded smoothly by sending high-quality observers. The five-member OIF mission, which was led by the President of the Supreme Court of Benin, participated along with other observer missions in all phases of the observation of the electoral process. They were coordinated by the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau. At the request of the Supreme Court of Guinea-Bissau, OIF also made available to that institution an adviser from the Supreme Court of Benin, an expert in electoral claims.

17. In accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the United Nations and OIF have continued to consult with a view to strengthening their cooperation in the area of electoral assistance and democracy. This cooperation came about during the electoral observation missions coordinated by the United Nations during the presidential elections in Chad in 2001. The two organizations have also cooperated closely in providing technical assistance in the preparation of and support for the electoral process in Chad in 2001.

18. On 5 and 6 March 2001, the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs paid a working visit to OIF headquarters in Paris. There senior United Nations and OIF officials agreed on a number of measures to strengthen their cooperation by, inter alia: (a) exchanging information on future requests for electoral assistance received from Member States; (b) having OIF participate, if possible, in needs assessment missions conducted by the Electoral Assistance Division in member countries of OIF; (c) making available OIF legal experts and mediators to participate in certain United Nations missions; (d) having OIF participate in workshops and training seminars held by the Electoral Assistance Division; and (e) including OIF electoral experts in the list of experts of the Electoral Assistance Division.

19. Still on the subject of promotion of the rule of law, democracy and human rights, the United Nations was involved in the preparation and holding of the symposium on the Practices of Democracy, Rights and Freedoms in the French-speaking Community world, held at Bamako in November 2000. This symposium brought together representatives of Governments and also parliamentarians, mayors, experts, academics and representatives of international and non-governmental organizations and civil society. It culminated in the adoption of a political declaration proclaiming that OIF and democracy are indivisible, clearly expressing its rejection of any seizure of power by force, and for the first time giving OIF the means to react strongly to any interruption in the democratic process and to violations of human rights in the francophone world.

20. Finally, given that the General Assembly, by resolution 53/22, proclaimed 2001 the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations, I welcome the recent initiatives of the International Organization of la Francophonie in the preparation of the ninth Summit of Heads of State and Government of countries that use French as a common language, which will have as its theme "dialogue of cultures". OIF organized two colloquiums, one in cooperation with the League of Arab States, in Paris, on 30 and 31 May 2000, on the subject "Francophonie — Arab world: a dialogue of cultures", and the other with lusophone and hispanophone organizations (the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, the Secretariat for Ibero-American Cooperation and the Latin Union), in Paris on 20 and 21 March 2001, on the topic: "Three linguistic communities and the challenges of globalization".

21. In June 1999, OIF and the United Nations signed an agreement establishing a trust fund for technical cooperation between the two organizations. In that regard, the Agence intergouvernementale de la Francophonie has made available to the United Nations young experts for periods of up to two years, including one in the Electoral Assistance Division and another in the Africa II Division of the Department of Political Affairs.

III. Cooperation in the economic, social and cultural fields and with the programmes and funds of the United Nations and its specialized agencies

22. Apart from the strengthened cooperation between secretariats in the political area, the United Nations programmes, funds and agencies, several of which are linked to OIF through separate cooperation agreements, have intensified their cooperation in the economic, social and cultural fields.

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

23. During the period under review, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and OIF have cooperated closely in the context of the technical cooperation for development project. In June 1999, they signed an agreement establishing a trust fund to finance project activities. One of the main objectives of the project is to involve experts from developing countries in the technical cooperation activities of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in the field or in the activities of other United Nations offices. In July 2001, over 20 experts funded by OIF under this agreement were already working at the United Nations.

24. OIF participated actively in several meetings organized by the United Nations, in particular the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" (5 to 9 June 2000) and the special session entitled "World Summit for Social Development and Beyond: Achieving Social Development for All in a Globalized World" (26 June to 1 July 2000).

25. In accordance with the decision taken at the OIF Summit in Moncton, the first OIF conference on women took place in Luxembourg in February 2000, in preparation for the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on women. The conference focused on power and development, two priority questions addressed in the Beijing Platform for Action. The Luxembourg Declaration, which was circulated at the special session, reaffirmed the commitments made at Beijing and outlined some strategic measures for their realization. OIF also submitted a related declaration as a contribution to the special session of the General Assembly on social development.

26. OIF also participated actively in the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries held in Brussels in May 2001. Consultations among ministers and heads of delegation of the least developed countries members of OIF were held under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General of OIF on 13 May 2001, just before the conference. Moreover, on 18 May, the latter joined with the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) for the official ceremony to mark the signing of the bilateral investment agreements which were negotiated with the least developed countries members of OIF in January 2001 in Geneva.

Department of Public Information

27. OIF and the Information Technology Section of the Department of Public Information have strengthened and broadened the cooperation which they

began in 1998. To further their efforts in the area of training in the use of the Internet as a development tool, the Agence intergouvernementale de la Francophonie and the Institut francophone des nouvelles technologies de l'information et de la formation held two training seminars in Beirut at the headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). These two events, conducted in Arabic and French, were also a result of cooperation with UNDP and received support from the Information Centres Service and the United Nations Information Centre at Beirut. The United Nations and OIF are jointly bearing the costs of the seminars, and are together providing the trainers and making the practical arrangements.

28. The first seminar, held in October 2000, followed the format for the inaugural seminar in Abidjan in 1999 by bringing together 30 experts in institutional communications coming mainly from ministries of education, information/communications or development/planning with representatives of the Information Centres in North Africa and members of ESCWA, along with the representatives of the ESCWA Information Centre and the UNDP office at Beirut. The seminar centred on workshops for dissemination of and familiarization with the use of Internet tools, and a presentation on Internet resources offered by the United Nations system and OIF and other francophone resources.

29. The second seminar, held in April 2001 on the topic "Use of the Internet and the media", brought together around 30 representatives of the media established in Beirut. Aimed at journalists, the seminar centred on workshops on familiarization with the use of Internet tools, presentations and discussions on the contribution of the Internet to traditional media activities, its interface with those media and such issues as copyrights, in addition to a general presentation on the Internet resources offered by the United Nations system and OIF.

30. A discussion group for participants in the seminars entitled "Franconu" has been established on the Internet. It allows members and addressees to exchange information on the development of the Francophone Internet, and their experiences in the use and development of Internet sites.

31. On 23 February 2000, the United Nations Information Centre at Paris participated in a colloquium on "Cultural diversity and dialogue among cultures in la Francophonie" organized by the Haut Conseil de la Francophonie, at UNESCO headquarters.

32. La Francophonie has made available to the Information Technology Section an expert specializing in computers and new information technology and has funded the post for two years pursuant to a specific agreement concluded with the United Nations. This expert took up his post in May 2000 and has contributed to the enhancement of the United Nations web site in French and to the development of tools for the operation of the site (database, search engine, statistics, etc.)

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

33. Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 54/25, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and OIF have cooperated in various fields, in particular, capacity-building for women. ECA has signed a technical cooperation agreement with OIF for the provision of technical support to the implementation of the work programmes (2000-2001) undertaken by the African Centre for Women (ACW) through funding for the recruitment of experts.

34. Cooperation between ECA, ACW and OIF was further strengthened by the agreement in June 2000 which provided initial financial support for the establishment of two subregional networks for the development of African women's entrepreneurship. OIF also funded the recruitment of an expert in communications and public relations to serve in the ECA secretariat at Addis Ababa.

35. The recently opened OIF office in Addis Ababa has greatly facilitated the above-mentioned efforts by, inter alia, encouraging many high-level representatives of French-speaking countries to participate in the development conferences and activities sponsored by ECA.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

36. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and OIF have established ongoing cooperation through active participation in, and support of, UNESCO activities by the Institut de l'énergie et de l'environnement de la

Francophonie (IEPF) within the framework of the technical training programme on world renewable energy. IEPF also contributes to UNESCO by offering an annual summer course for French-speaking countries. This "Summer School on Solar Electricity for Rural and Remote Areas" has been held regularly at UNESCO headquarters since 1988. At the twelfth session of the summer course, held in July 2000 as part of the training programme on world renewable energy, IEPF covered the costs of participation for five students from French-speaking countries and of technical visits to locations in Morocco where solar energy is used.

37. During the past two years, OIF has carried out in-depth studies on cultural diversity and issues relating to globalization, particularly in the form of expert groups in which UNESCO has participated actively. Since 1999, the publicity office of the World Heritage Centre has been cooperating with the OIF Agence universitaire de la francophonie. As a result, four participants from the universities of French-speaking countries (Gabon, Haiti, Senegal and Togo), have received funding. Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar and the University of Benin in Lomé, Togo, sent participants to the sixth international Seminar of Forum UNESCO (University and Heritage) in Byblos, Lebanon, from 10 to 15 December 2000. At the seminar, it was decided to organize a regional workshop for the universities of French-speaking West Africa, to be held in Senegal in January 2002 in cooperation with the Agence universitaire de la francophonie and the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Africa, located in Dakar.

38. OIF helped finance the translation and publication of the French edition of *The History of the Scientific and Cultural Development of Mankind (The History of Mankind)*, edited by UNESCO, Edicef and Hachette.

39. Negotiations have been under way for over a year with a view to the secondment of an associate expert to UNICEF as part of the Young French-speaking Experts Programme of the Agence intergouvernementale de la Francophonie.

United Nations Development Programme

40. There has been active cooperation between UNDP and OIF in several African countries, particularly Benin, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mauritius and Rwanda, in the areas of poverty eradication, good governance, combating human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), promotion of activities in the private sector and new information and communication technologies.

41. The two organizations have been working together to promote the private sector in Benin since 1999. UNDP is a member of the Management Committee of the Francophone Support Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises, and several such enterprises have been financed by the Fund through the UNDP programme for promotion of the private sector. There are plans for expanded cooperation in the area of poverty reduction with a focus on micro-finance and on the use of new technologies in government following public administration reforms.

42. In Chad, the two organizations coordinated observation of the May 2001 presidential elections and provided training for trainers of election agents. UNDP, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and OIF financed the establishment of a textile industry cooperative (COTIMAF), which is a source of income for women living in the outskirts of N'Djamena.

43. In Guinea, OIF, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and UNDP are helping the Government to finance preparations for a workshop in the context of implementation of the National Programme for the Development of the Private Sector through the Fund for the Integration of French-speaking Least Developed Countries into the Global Trade System.

44. In Mauritania, an OIF-funded project for girls' education will be implemented jointly with the United Nations system. Other areas of cooperation under discussion involve the use of new information and communication technologies through, inter alia, university activities, support for the media, human rights and decentralization.

45. In Rwanda, OIF and UNDP are working on an HIV/AIDS project designed to strengthen local capacities to respond to the challenge of HIV/AIDS and thereby reduce its social and economic impact.

46. The UNDP Office in Lebanon maintains regular contact with OIF although they have not yet undertaken any joint projects. In May 2000, the OIF General Administrator and the UNDP Resident Coordinator in

Lebanon held meetings during which they discussed possibilities for cooperation.

47. At the OIF Summit, which is to be held in Beirut from 26 to 28 October 2001, the United Nations Volunteers and UNDP will promote their joint projects and, in particular, the International Year of Volunteers. In cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment and several environmental groups, UNDP will sponsor an exhibit on UNDP-sponsored projects and programmes on the environment; it will also finance the entire segment on environmental management, including the workshops and technical presentations.

48. A strategic partnership has been established between the Sustainable Development Networking Programme in Haiti, which is financed by UNDP, and the Association of Partially or Wholly French-Language Universities (AUPELF), which is sponsored by OIF, with a view to developing the capacities of the principal national bodies working in the field of new information and communication technologies through, inter alia, the creation of Internet sites. The primary purpose of the training provided through this cooperation is to strengthen the abilities and human resources needed to develop Internet sites for the relevant institutions and ministries, including the Ministry of Planning and Cooperation, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Public Works and Communication, the Ministry of Education and the Office of the Prime Minister.

49. This group of Internet site developers will initially establish these sites in the area of administration, thereby substantially strengthening UNDP support for the development of a "cybergovernment" strategy in Haiti. AUPELF has been a key partner in the attainment of these goals, primarily through its involvement in new information and communication technology training. OIF plans to expand its cooperation with AUPELF in these areas and to increase the number of member institutions in the Sustainable Development Networking Programme in Haiti.

50. As the focal point for cooperation between OIF and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), UNDP is developing a capacity-building programme for Haitian national bodies working in the area of international administration.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

51. On 8 September 1997, OIF and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) signed a framework agreement on cooperation, under which they have strengthened their cooperation through regular consultations. The Office has been involved in several OIF programmes and, in particular, has provided experts to teach in OIF training programmes. OIF has also been represented at the last four sessions of the Commission on Human Rights through its permanent observer mission in Geneva.

52. On 26 October 1999, OHCHR and OIF held a working meeting in Geneva at which a number of proposals were made with a view to strengthening technical cooperation between them in three areas: technical cooperation (implementation of the principal human rights instruments, capacity-building for national institutions and human rights education and training), international dialogue (World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance), and information and reciprocal consultation (increased participation as an observer in the work of the Commission on Human Rights and of its subsidiary body, the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights).

53. OIF has also signed an agreement with the Office to provide funding for a young OIF associate expert, a specialist in human rights, who participates actively in the work of the OHCHR Activities and Programmes Branch. The two organizations are currently considering the recruitment of other young French-speaking associate experts.

54. On 28 April 2000, OIF held a working meeting on democracy and the rule of law in Paris with a view to the organization of a high-level symposium on the same topic, which was held in Bamako from 1 to 3 November 2000 and in which OHCHR participated.

55. OHCHR will also participate in the third OIF symposium, which is to be held in Geneva on 26 and 27 September 2001, on the theme, "Cooperation for peace in the Great Lakes Region of Africa: The role of human rights and humanitarian law". This meeting will deal with the promotion of and respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, promotion of the rule of law and democracy among the many peoples of the Great Lakes region of Africa and support for local human rights activists.

56. In its biennial programme, OIF gave priority to its participation in the preparatory process for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, which has just taken place in Durban, South Africa. OIF took active steps to participate in the preparation for the Conference. It also worked hard to promote, among other activities, the dissemination of relevant documents and, at its various meetings, encouraged the ratification by OIF member States of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

57. Between 2000 and 2001, the UNCTAD secretariat gave OIF substantial help with its assistance to the least developed French-speaking countries in the context of preparations for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, organized by UNCTAD and held recently in Brussels. OIF played an active part in the Conference and issued a statement. In December 2000, UNCTAD submitted a proposal to OIF for a joint UNCTAD-OIF project to benefit a small number of least developed countries by producing a series of publications on the specific consequences of globalization for each country.

58. Through the Agency of la Francophonie, OIF contributes to the funding of a trust fund for capacity-building in developing countries in relation to such issues as international investment agreements (IIAs). The Trust Fund, set up by UNCTAD, became operational in December 2000 following an assessment of UNCTAD activities relating to IIAs and the adoption of the programme at the tenth session of UNCTAD, held in Bangkok in February 2000. A large number of activities have been launched in this area, including the organization of three series of workshops on negotiating bilateral investment treaties, as a result of which a number of such treaties have been signed; a pilot seminar for non-governmental organizations in Namibia; a regional World Trade Organization (WTO)/UNCTAD symposium on trade, investment and development in Kuala Lumpur; a WTO/UNCTAD round table with business sector representatives in Bangkok; and the introduction of an intensive training course for English- and French-speaking IIA negotiators. An intensive training course for French-speaking African countries took place in Alexandria, Egypt, from 5 to 15 June 2001. With assistance from the Trust Fund, other titles have been published in the UNCTAD Series on issues in international investment agreements, including such topics as "International investment agreements: Flexibility for development", "Transfer of funds" and "Environment". Papers on social responsibility, home country measures, host country operational measures and illicit payments are in preparation.

59. The FRANCODE programme to promote capacity-building in the area of international trade and enterprise development receives technical assistance from UNCTAD and also enjoys financial support from OIF. The aim of the programme is to develop the human resources capacity of OIF member countries in the sphere of international trade, the long-term objective being to enhance their negotiating capacity so that they can participate more actively and effectively in multilateral negotiations and, at the same time, develop the competitiveness of their export enterprises. The focus is on training trainers and developing a network of French-speaking training centres which will operate the programme. The training segment of the programme is run jointly by UNCTAD and WTO in cooperation with the Institut national de développement economique in Bucharest, the Institut Supérieur de Comptabilité et administration des enterprises in Casablanca, the Institut francophone de l'entreprenariat in Mauritius and Senghor University in Alexandria. In 2000, four workshops on multilateral international trade negotiations were organized in Bucharest, Casablanca, Mauritius and Alexandria. Some candidates selected during these workshops attended a workshop for the training of trainers, held in Alexandria in February 2001.

60. Talks are taking place between the Agency of la Francophonie and UNCTAD on the possibility of jointly organizing a seminar on the potential and strategies for funding cultural industries in the francophone countries.

61. Following the signing, in 1999, of a cooperation agreement between OIF and UNCTAD, OIF undertook to fund, for a period of two years, associate experts and young professionals wishing to work for UNCTAD. Two associate experts from OIF member developing countries or countries in transition are currently working under this scheme in the UNCTAD Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities.

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

62. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) collaborates with OIF through the Agency of la Francophonie in the execution of several projects, including:

(a) The international civil service training programme run by the Intergovernmental Agency of la Francophonie and UNITAR in conjunction with the International Institute for Public Administration and the Institute of International Relations of Cameroon, designed specifically for national officials from sectoral ministries of French-speaking developing countries and Eastern European countries. The seven-month training programme familiarizes participants with international public administration and multilateral mechanisms. It also offers practical experience in how international organizations function. Instruction is given in Yaoundé, Paris and Geneva over a period of four months. It is supplemented by three-month internships in international organizations;

(b) The environmental legislation training programme, which offers a distance-learning course on international environmental legislation. The French version of the course is made possible by the financial contribution of the Agency of la Francophonie;

(c) The development of an electronic distance-learning system for improving the efficiency of distance-learning mechanisms for international environmental legislation courses, with assistance from contributions by the Francophone Information Highway Fund.

IV. Participation in conferences organized by the United Nations system and OIF

63. The United Nations was represented at high level at the eighth Summit of Heads of State and Government held at Moncton in September 1999, the Conference of Women of la Francophonie in February 2000 and the Bamako Symposium on the Practices of Democracy, Rights and Freedoms in the French-speaking Community.

64. For its part, OIF has been represented at numerous conferences and meetings organized under United Nations auspices. In addition to those mentioned in earlier paragraphs, OIF was represented at the fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth sessions of the General Assembly, the Millennium Summit and the special sessions of the General Assembly on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, adopted in Barbados, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, as well as the recent United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. On each of the latter four occasions and at other United Nations meetings, such as those of the Commission on Sustainable Development, the OIF member countries submitted a joint statement reflecting the position of the French-speaking group on the subject under consideration.

V. Observations

65. Since my last report, cooperation between the United Nations and OIF has grown even closer. It embraces a growing number of areas of activity in which the two organizations have a shared interest. It is characterized by a clear awareness of their respective comparative advantages and by a constant concern for complementarity. This applies both in the political sphere, in which OIF supports the work of the United Nations and plays an increasingly active role in accordance with the objectives of the Charter of la Francophonie, adopted in Hanoi in 1997, and in economic, social and cultural areas, as evidenced by the number and quality of the cooperation activities undertaken jointly by the United Nations system and OIF. Continued personal contacts and working meetings between United Nations and OIF officials should lead to a yet deeper collaboration with a view to improving the efficacy of the efforts of both organizations.

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The situation in Central America: procedures for the establishment of a firm and lasting peace and progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala: renewal of mandate

Report of the Secretary-General*

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 55/177 of 19 December 2000, by which the Assembly authorized the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA) originally set out in resolution 51/198 B of 27 March 1997, in order for the Mission to continue to verify compliance with the peace agreements signed between the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG). By resolution 55/177, the General Assembly renewed the mandate of MINUGUA from 1 January to 31 December 2001 and requested me to submit to it at its fifty-sixth session an updated report and recommendations regarding the continuation of the peace-building phase after 31 December 2001.

2. On 14 September 2000, I submitted to the General Assembly my report recommending the renewal of the mandate of MINUGUA from 1 January until 31 December 2001 (A/55/389). In that report, in addition to informing the Assembly of the parties' request that the Mission maintain its presence in Guatemala until 2003, I presented a plan for gradually scaling down its operations until they concluded in 2003. At the same time, I recommended that the Mission continue and increase its liaison with the international community and the United Nations system, so that the United Nations agencies and programmes focus on the centrality of the peace agreements after the conclusion of the mandate of MINUGUA.

3. On 1 June 2001, I reported to the General Assembly on the status of the Guatemalan peace process through my sixth report on the verification of compliance with the peace agreements (A/55/973-S/2001/139). Subsequently, on 8 August 2001, I transmitted to the Assembly the Mission's twelfth report on human rights (A/56/273). The present report describes the progress made in 2001 and the remaining challenges. It also contains a number of recommendations for assisting the peace-building process and continuing the gradual scaling-down of operations.

* The present report was submitted after the 3 July deadline in order to include information that was not available by the designated date.

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II. Background

4. The timetable for the implementation of the commitments made in the peace agreements, as contained in the Agreement on the Implementation, Compliance and Verification Timetable for the Peace Agreements (A/51/796-S/1997/114, annex I), expired in December 2000. Since much of the peace agenda remained outstanding, the Commission to Follow up the Implementation of the Peace Agreements began the process of rescheduling pending commitments which culminated in the implementation timetable for 2000-2004 (see A/55/389, para. 40).

5. The ceremony at which the rescheduled implementation timetable for 2000-2004 was signed and presented took place on 12 December 2000. The President of the Republic, the President of the Congress and the President of the judiciary signed as honorary witnesses and stated that full implementation of the new timetable, through the combined efforts of the State and civil society, would give considerable impetus to Guatemala's democratic development. I am encouraged by this renewed commitment to peace, this time expressed by the national authorities at the highest level.

6. Since the rescheduling, the peace process has made little progress. In the first three months of the year, growing social and political polarization and, especially in the country's interior, a climate of heightened conflict began to be observed. Another key development in that period was the Government's presentation of a set of fiscal measures which aroused considerable opposition in some sectors of society. In June 2001, a mass escape from Escuintla maximum security prison heightened the public's feelings of vulnerability. The Government declared a "state of alert" throughout the country, for which provision is made in the Constitution of Guatemala "in the event of invasion of the national territory, serious disturbance of the peace, activities against the security of the State or public disaster". The Mission expressed its concern at the fact that the justification given for this measure, which restricted the enjoyment of important rights, bore little relation to the relevant provisions of the Constitution.

7. In July, I asked my Chef de Cabinet to visit Guatemala to convey to the State authorities, representatives of organizations of civil society and the population at large the continuing support of the United Nations for the Guatemalan peace process. During his visit, he found that, despite considerable polarization, Guatemalans remain willing to settle their differences through dialogue, to make progress in complying with the peace agreements and to reach the consensus necessary for the consolidation of peace.

III. Furthering the consolidation of the peace-building process in Guatemala

8. During 2001, MINUGUA continued to carry out its mandate of verifying compliance with all the peace agreements, as well as its good offices, public information and technical assistance activities. At the same time, as recommended by the General Assembly, the process of incorporating the substance of the peace agreements into the technical and financial assistance programmes and projects of the United Nations funds and programmes, in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Guatemala, has continued. The operational aspects of developing this process are expanded upon in the section on the structure and staffing of the Mission.

9. Early in the year, in view of the standstill in the implementation of the commitments made in the peace agreements, the Follow-up Commission defined a reactivation strategy which involved preparing and presenting priority agendas for the main sectors of State activity with a view to the implementation in 2001 of important pending commitments. As indicated by the parties, the peace agreements contain a broad range of commitments whose main components are: resettlement, integration and compensation; comprehensive human development; sustainable development of production; and modernization of the democratic State. The agenda for the executive branch includes important commitments relating to national reconciliation, socio-economic aspects, public security and the armed forces, and human rights and justice. The agenda for the legislative branch suggests to the Congress of the Republic that it consider an important set of laws on participation, modernization of the State, the electoral system, human rights, indigenous peoples' rights, social development and other initiatives in the context of the Fiscal Pact. Lastly, the agenda for the judicial system suggests giving priority to the drafting of a State policy against crime and to expanding access to justice for the entire population.

10. In this context, social sectors and members of the Government and the international community also began to consider a strategy that would promote the strengthening of democracy and the implementation of the peace agreements. To help arrive at a common denominator, based on the peace agreements, which broad sectors of the population could support, MINUGUA, at the request of the parties, conducted an extensive round of consultations which revealed a willingness on the part of sectors of society to work together on specific issues. The achievement of such consensus and the resulting fulfilment of such important commitments as those aimed at bringing about the structural changes necessary for sustainable social and productive development, public participation and strengthening of the political system and civilian power would be an opportunity to resume and advance the peace process and make it irreversible. The conclusion of agreements on specific issues between State actors and civil society would help ensure that the changes made prospered and became sustainable.

11. The recommendations in this report refer particularly to 2002, when important ongoing processes will have to be consolidated and others begun which, together, seek to make the peace process irreversible. In 2002, compliance with the rescheduled timetable for 2000-2004 will have to speed up and important reforms will have to go into effect, such as the amendments to the Elections and Political Parties Act which will govern the general elections to be held in 2003. It will also be necessary to consolidate the incorporation of the peace agenda in the agenda of the agencies and programmes of the United Nations system and to continue the gradual transfer of technical assistance and institution-building projects.

IV. Status of implementation of the peace agreements

12. As I have already said, much has been achieved but much fundamental work remains to be done. Ethnic discrimination, unequal job opportunities, gender inequality, the fact that large sectors of the population are still living in poverty and extreme poverty and inequalities in access to basic services are jeopardizing the achievements and sustainability of the peace process. Overcoming this situation is essential for ensuring peace and ending the climate of heightened conflict that still characterizes Guatemalan society.

13. During 2001, in a climate of polarization and heightened social conflict, the Mission had to provide increased support, facilitation and good offices at the request of the parties in order to exert a positive influence on the prevention and resolution of many local and even national conflicts. I note the recent establishment of the Presidential Office for Conflict Resolution, the function of which is to coordinate a comprehensive approach to multiple sources of tension which have varying causes, as well as the technical assistance which the Mission is providing to the Office. The latter's role will be to facilitate the activities of permanent State bodies, which bear primary responsibility for overcoming the structural causes of conflict.

14. Systematic, across-the-board impunity for crimes and human rights violations remains the principal obstacle to the enjoyment of those rights. Since 2000, there has been a significant increase in complaints of harassment and threats directed against individuals and entities working for the protection of human rights, as well as judicial officials and other persons involved in judicial proceedings. Such threats and harassment, which are also directed against the press and journalists, are often related to the investigation and trial of individuals with past or present ties to the State, suggesting that they may form part of a systematic campaign of intimidation. The failure to clear up such incidents and the impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators justify the climate of fear and the assumption that they are linked to persons and practices from the past. Another important aspect is that of the full exercise of freedom of expression and the building of a democratic society. Accordingly, it is also necessary to expand access to the media, especially for indigenous people, avoid media concentration and monopolies and safeguard the public's right to receive objective, unbiased information.

15. The most recent reports on the situation of human rights in Guatemala had commended the State's exemplary policy in that regard, the implementation of which had been spearheaded by the Presidential Human Rights Commission. The repeated changes in the Chairmanship of this Commission are therefore cause for concern and I hope that they do not represent a retreat from the human rights policy outlined when the current Government came to power.

16. The social spending targets established in the peace agreements have been met. However, there are

still major gaps in social development between the indigenous and non-indigenous population, between rural and urban areas and between women and men. Even though some indicators, such as life expectancy, maternal and infant mortality and literacy, have continued to improve, considerable efforts must still be made and the execution of social development projects must be substantially improved.

17. There are serious delays in fulfilling the commitments made in the Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/49/882-S/1995/256, annex). The work of the joint commissions has produced uneven results and several of them have encountered serious problems. It is essential that the Government immediately adopt a plan of work that will promote the implementation of this Agreement. MINUGUA, for its part, will have to step up significantly its verification, advisory and institution-building activities in this area.

18. In order to promote sustainable productive development and thereby overcome the structural causes of poverty, the peace agreements established the need to undertake legal, institutional and financial reforms. There has been progress in some specific areas, but the formulation of a policy of sustainable productive development and the building of institutions capable of promoting it have scarcely begun. One example of this situation is the failure to properly reactivate the development councils in their central role of formulating plans and strategies as a contribution to the design of a comprehensive development policy.

19. The initial phase of resettlement and demobilization has been completed, but the sustainable, equitable development of resettlement areas and the productive integration of uprooted and demobilized population groups is still facing serious constraints. The social and economic integration of these sectors, in conditions of safety, dignity and sustainability, is an issue of national importance. The commitment to develop and implement a comprehensive rural development policy that addresses the needs of the entire rural population living in poverty and extreme poverty has not been fulfilled.

20. At the national level, major forums for participation have emerged in connection with the design of some very specific public policies, such as fiscal policy and policies on educational reform, the advancement and development of women, culture and housing. However, the commitments to establish institutional mechanisms for social participation and to strengthen and properly reactivate existing ones such as the development councils have not been fulfilled. Such commitments will enable new forms of public oversight to be developed and will promote transparency in Government decision-making. At the same time, the failure to institutionalize the forums for indigenous peoples' participation at the municipal and departmental levels, combined with their limited involvement in decision-making, is increasing their marginalization. It is important to make progress in the recognition and institutionalization of indigenous peoples' forms of organization. Another key aspect is the removal of obstacles to the promotion of political participation, including access to documentation and the decentralization of voting centres.

21. It should be noted that the National Women's Forum promoted women's participation, developed an organized, recognized network at the national level and facilitated the establishment of several participation forums. At its fifty-fifth session, the United Nations General Assembly welcomed the establishment of a Presidential Secretariat for Women with advisory and public policy coordination functions. In that framework, consensus was reached on a national policy on women and an equal opportunity plan was developed. It is encouraging that the Government has approved the National Policy for the Advancement and Development of Guatemalan Women: Equal Opportunity Plan 2001-2006.

22. The peace agreements called for changes in the political and electoral system, through amendments to the Elections and Political Parties Act, that would strengthen the electoral system and increase public participation in order to enhance the legitimacy of public authority and consolidate representative democracy. Accordingly, implementation of the recently approved amendments to the Act will require careful planning to enable the next general elections to be held in accordance with the new legislation.

23. Greater and more rapid progress must be made in reforming the system of justice so that it serves the protection of human rights and the resolution of conflicts. To that end, it is essential to implement the recommendations of the Commission on the Strengthening of the Justice System and the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers. I am encouraged by the work being done by the

Commission for Monitoring and Supporting the Strengthening of the Justice System, which has become an important forum for dialogue between civil society and State institutions on such important issues as legislative amendments relating to court jurisdiction and the prison system, professionalization of judicial personnel, the budgetary situation of the justice sector and acts of social violence. The United Nations Development Programme, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United States Agency for International Development and other international cooperation agencies are currently supporting different components of the comprehensive programme for the strengthening of the justice system.

24. An evaluation of progress in the areas of security, police reform and transformation of the role of the armed forces shows that the fulfilment of these commitments is confronted with the challenges of a society in transition. The situation of insecurity and the limitations of the new National Civil Police have been factors in the continued involvement of the armed forces in public security tasks. As I have already said, this represents a setback in the demilitarization of public security and is not conducive to the strengthening of civilian power in general and the police in particular.

25. With regard to the commitments on the role of the armed forces in a democratic society, the results have been uneven. The rescheduling carried out by the Follow-up Commission and the creation of new forums for the exchange of information and technical assistance are encouraging developments which I hope will lead to the proper implementation of all the commitments, particularly those concerning military intelligence and the replacement of the Presidential General Staff.

26. The pending legislative agenda includes such important laws as the act establishing the armed forces, the laws regulating the oversight of State intelligence bodies, the civic service act, the act regulating private security companies, the arms and munitions act and the public order act. In other areas, it is essential to make progress on: the comprehensive amendment of the Penal Code, including the typification of sexual discrimination and sexual harassment as crimes; the amendments to the Municipal Code, the Development Councils Act and the Juvenile Code; and the drafting of a decentralization bill. The State's recent ratification of various human rights treaties, including the first Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Protocol of San Salvador), and of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption is commendable, as is the adoption of amendments to the Labour Code aimed at bringing domestic labour law more closely into line with international labour law.

27. On a number of occasions, I have emphasized how important it is that the State mobilize domestic resources to confront the challenges of human development, State modernization and sustainable productive development. Recently, the Congress of the Republic adopted a set of legislative amendments aimed at meeting the target rescheduled for 2002, of a tax burden of 12 per cent of gross domestic product. These amendments include increasing the value added tax and amending the Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Tax Code in order to penalize tax evasion. In this context, I reiterate the need for the Government to comply with all the provisions of the Fiscal Pact. This means moving ahead simultaneously on all the issues and actions envisaged in the Pact, both tax-related and otherwise, as well as pursuing economic recovery.

28. In order to fulfil its mandate of keeping the public informed of progress in the implementation of the peace agreements, the Mission prepared, issued and disseminated eight thematic verification reports on: exhumation procedures; commitments relating to rural development and natural resources; the situation of children and adolescents; the problem of lynchings; the climate of conflict; the participation of Guatemalan women; the situation of the National Civil Police; and the status of compliance with the Fiscal Pact. It is also preparing a weekly news bulletin and radio and television programmes on important aspects of the peace agreements. As part of the institution-building process, it is conducting training programmes on human rights, communication, democracy and development for teachers and journalists.

V. Structure and staffing of the Mission

29. In my 1 June 2001 report to the General Assembly (A/55/973), I reported on the

implementation during the first half of 2001 of my proposal for the gradual scaling back of MINUGUA operations. In December 2000, the first reduction was made, involving a 39-per-cent cut in the Mission's budget, and the reconfiguration of its presence in the country with 46 per cent fewer staff.

30. The reduction had a particular impact on the Mission's territorial deployment, bringing the number of its regional offices down from eight to six and its regional suboffices from five to four. In the case of the mobile teams, only one of the five envisaged for 2001 remained in operation and the staff assigned to the others were absorbed into the corresponding regional office or suboffice.

31. The Mission's new territorial deployment had an impact on its operational capacity and forced it to set priorities for its activities, especially verification and institution-building. Given the overall situation of the peace process, various sectors expressed concern about the possibility that MINUGUA would scale down its field presence still further. The main concern was that this would affects its ability to provide good offices in a continuing climate of heightened conflict.

32. During the period 2002-2003, the Mission will have to meet new challenges: signs that the human rights situation is not improving and in some cases has deteriorated; the growing climate of conflict in the country's interior; the need to give priority to verifying and promoting compliance with the Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and the tasks of verifying the exercise of political rights and providing technical assistance in connection with the new electoral legislation that will govern the holding of the 2003 general elections.

33. Under the circumstances and in response to the justified concerns expressed by various sectors, I propose that the reduction envisaged for 2002 should not affect or alter the territorial deployment planned for 2001 and that all the mobile teams envisaged should be put into operation. Concomitantly, the regional offices will be reinforced by redeploying posts from MINUGUA headquarters. The functions assigned to the Field Coordinator will be reassumed by the Deputy Head of MINUGUA, assisted by a field coordination officer.

34. In 2001, MINUGUA headquarters was structured around four substantive areas: human rights; juridical affairs; socio-economic affairs, resettlement and integration; and public security and the armed forces. In 2002, the substantive areas will be: human rights; socio-economic affairs, resettlement and integration; and public security and the armed forces. The Human Rights section will take over the verification of the justice system and the Juridical Affairs section will cease to function. The Legal Adviser's functions will be assumed by the Coordinator of the Transition Group (see para. 41 below). The remaining sections will stay the same as in 2001. The Public Information Office will continue its current functions but pay more attention to the need to provide information on the peace process to rural areas and to the indigenous population in particular.

35. The new Human Rights and Justice section will be responsible for verifying compliance with all the commitments made under the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights with regard to the administration of justice, such as guaranteeing that judges and prosecutors will be free from pressures of any kind, that due process will be enforced and that the duty to investigate and punish crimes and human rights violations will be fulfilled. It will also verify the right to justice, in particular, indigenous people's access to justice in their own language. Lastly, it will coordinate with the United Nations system the monitoring of the overall process of reform and modernization of the administration of justice.

36. In 2001, the offices of the Police and Military Advisers were merged with the Public Security and Armed Forces section and the number of police and military personnel was reduced from 51 to 10 police observers and from 20 to 4 military liaison officers. The Mission had one police observer in each regional office and the remaining police observers were assigned to Mission headquarters. There will be the same number of staff in 2002, but some of the police and military personnel assigned to headquarters will be transferred to field offices.

37. Of the planned special units on cross-cutting themes — participation, indigenous affairs, women and decentralization — in the end only the women's unit and the indigenous affairs unit were set up. The women's unit will cease to function and its monitoring and institution-building tasks will be transferred to the United Nations system. However, the Socio-economic Affairs section will maintain a focal point on the agrarian situation who will work in close coordination with the whole Mission. It is particularly important to

ensure that a gender perspective is mainstreamed in the Mission's activities, especially in its verification of the formulation and execution of State public policy.

38. To step up the work being done in relation to the Agreement on Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the provision of conflict-resolution advisory services and to meet the new challenges posed by the electoral reform, the Indigenous Affairs unit will become an Indigenous Affairs Advisory Service and a new Conflict-Resolution and State Reform unit will be set up.

39. As a way of guaranteeing cooperation, in terms of both strategic guidelines and operational arrangements within the United Nations system, projects financed from the trust fund for peace in Guatemala have begun to be gradually transferred to United Nations agencies. In 1999, MINUGUA began to transfer the management of several of its projects to the United Nations Office for Project Services.

40. In order to continue the transfer process in their United Nations Development Assistance Framework, the Mission will transfer to the inter-agency system all projects relating to the peace agenda. This includes the projects for providing technical assistance to the National Civil Police, the project to support the prison school, the justice and multiculturalism project, the projects related to Santa Eulalia Centre for the Administration of Justice and the support projects in the fiscal, labour and agrarian areas. Nevertheless, for reasons inherent in its mandate, MINUGUA will continue to execute the Programme of Institutional Assistance for Legal Reform, through which technical advice on the legislative agenda for peace is channelled to the Congress of the Republic, and the Public Information and Social Participation project, through which the Mission carries out its mandate to keep the public informed.

41. To provide guidelines for the projects and ensure that the peace agenda is incorporated in activities of the agencies and programmes of the United Nations system in Guatemala, in anticipation of the Mission's eventual withdrawal, a Transition Group will be set up, reporting to the office of the head of MINUGUA and composed of officials appointed by my Special Representative and by the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system for Operational Activities for Development. In 2002, the Transition Group will establish the policy guidelines for the projects being transferred to United Nations agencies and programmes. At the same time, the Transition Group Coordinator will be responsible for providing legal advice. This will make the transfer process and the gradual scaling-back of the Mission more coherent.

VI. Observations

42. The year 2002 will be decisive for progress in complying with the Guatemalan peace agreements. Substantive, sustained progress on the outstanding agenda is essential for overcoming the profound inequalities that still persist among the population and that are jeopardizing the achievements and sustainability of the peace process. It is also necessary to alternate the climate of heightened potential conflict that still characterizes Guatemalan society.

43. The timetable for 2000-2004 is a new challenge for the peace process. Decisive support for its implementation must spur the actions of government institutions, civil society and the international community. The United Nations once again expresses its wholehearted commitment to the Guatemalan peace process. Technical cooperation to support the institutions created under the peace process must continue and be expanded. All those institutions need strengthening, especially those in the country's interior, where the effects of peace need to be more visible and generate more participation.

44. At a time when the transformation of democratic institutions must be consolidated and the population needs to reap the benefits of a culture of peace, public authorities, the media and society as a whole must do their utmost to disseminate civic values and the values of peace, tolerance and dialogue as the basis for a new form of peaceful coexistence.

45. In general, a special effort must be made to build the capacities of national institutions for the protection and monitoring of human rights. In this new phase, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights will have to consider how best to strengthen its presence in the country and continue supporting such institutions.

46. I am very encouraged by the Guatemalan Government's request that a meeting of the Consultative Group for Guatemala be convened in late 2001. That meeting will enable the international community to renew its commitments and coordinate

its actions in the framework of the revised timetable for the implementation of the peace agreements.

47. Based on the foregoing, I recommend that the General Assembly authorize the renewal of the mandate of MINUGUA from 1 January to 31 December 2002, subject to regular reports on compliance with and the implementation of the peace agreements, and that the Mission be given the necessary resources for its operations.